



**SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL  
LIBRARY COUNCIL  
GUIDELINES  
FOR  
MEMBERSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Revised March 2013

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# ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

## **SCRLC's Advisory Committees**

Thank you for your interest in serving on an SCRLC advisory committee. SCRLC's advisory committees include: Awareness & Advocacy, Digitizing, Education & Training, Hospital Library Services Program, Information Technologies & Services, and Resource Sharing. Serving on an advisory committee is a voluntary effort and a very rewarding one. Through participation, you will experience excellent networking opportunities while impacting regional and statewide programs, service, and policies.

## **Establishment of Committees**

As per SCRLC's Bylaws, "the executive director shall have the power to establish member advisory committees that serve in an advisory or consultative capacity to the executive director. The executive director shall describe in writing the specific charges and terms for such committees, and shall appoint their members. The executive director shall inform the Board of Trustees of the establishment of committees and the names of all committee members." The executive director and Board of Trustees are always willing to consider additional advisory committees if the need can be demonstrated.

## **Committee Requirements**

- Advisory committees must have a statement of purpose, goals and objectives.
- The purpose of each committee shall be approved by the executive director and reviewed periodically by the committee.
- Committee members should be familiar with SCRLC's *Plan of Service*; annual goals should be developed from the PoS and in conjunction with SCRLC's annual *Work Plan*.
- Each committee shall set annual work goals and shall review accomplishments at the end of the calendar year.
- Each committee should issue a written report of its accomplishments for use in SCRLC publications. Committee members may also share the report with their directors or supervisors.

## **Committee Membership**

- Committees shall consist of a maximum of twelve members.
- Committee membership is limited to those working in a member library/library system and *their members*, or personal SCRLC members.
- Committees should be representative of all types of libraries and library systems.
- New members are sought both through a call for volunteers and by invitation.
- Committee members are appointed by the executive director.

## **Terms of Office**

- Committee members serve for three year terms, beginning in January. Terms of office are staggered, so that no more than three committee members are replaced each January.
- Newly appointed members receive a confirmation of their appointment from the SCRLC liaison, minutes from or links to previous meetings, the committee's purpose, and annual goals.
- The Committee Chair shall serve for one year, January – December, and may serve consecutively.
- Committee members may serve for consecutive terms of office provided that the committee ensures that opportunities for widespread participation remain.
- An SCRLC library worker may be a member of up to two SCRLC advisory committees at one time.

## **Committee Chair**

- The committee members shall select a committee chair from among them.
- The committee chair :
  - develops the meeting agenda in conjunction with the SCRLC liaison (the SCRLC distributes to the members, the agenda and meeting documents);
  - runs the meeting;
  - serves as a sounding board for the SCRLC liaison, members of the committee and other South Central members;
  - helps identify potential committee members;
  - appoints a secretary from within the committee to take the minutes. The secretary shall provide the SCRLC office with a copy of minutes within three weeks following the meeting. A standard format for minutes is used (attached);
  - attends SCRLC's annual meeting and other relevant regional meetings.

## **Meetings**

- Most committees meet four times a year.
- Meetings dates are set well in advance, often prior to the new year. Changes to the date of a scheduled meeting may occur under rare circumstances.
- Meetings are held at a mutually agreed upon location; virtual attendance via web conferencing software may be used.
- Committee members are expected to attend all meetings. If a member cannot attend a meeting, he or she should notify the Council office in advance.
- Committee members missing more than 50% of the meetings in one year may be asked to resign.

### **SCRLC's Liaison Role**

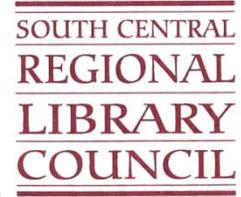
- South Central Regional Library Council will provide professional staff to act as liaisons with committees.
- The liaison will attend all meetings, and will assist committees with the following tasks:
  - identifies possible new members;
  - issues letters of invitation for committee membership;
  - sends confirmation letters of committee membership;
  - develops the agenda with the Chair;
  - mails meeting announcements, agendas and minutes to the committee;
  - helps identify possible locations for meetings;
  - makes actual arrangements for committee meetings;
  - assists with virtual meeting arrangements (hardware and monitoring);
  - ensures that each member leaving the committee receives a Certificate of Appreciation.
- SCRLC cannot provide refreshments for committee meetings; however, committee members or hosts may provide them.

### **Inactive Committees**

- Committees become inactive when their stated purpose is no longer appropriate and/or when member interest is not evident.
- Inactive committees are dissolved by the executive director after three years of non-activity.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, March 15, 2013

# STANDARD FORMAT FOR MINUTES



SCRLC Logo at right margin

**Name of Committee**  
**Date of Meeting**  
**Place**  
**Notes**

**Present:**

**Excused:**

Summary of issues discussed and actions taken for each agenda item.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Recorded by:**

**Notes:**

- Minutes should be prepared in Microsoft Word using Ariel 12 and should be emailed to the SCRLC office within three weeks of the meeting. The SCRLC liaison will review them for accuracy and make any necessary revisions.
- Consistently include organizational affiliation after member names for the benefit of the Board.
- Committee minutes are distributed to committee members, the SCRLC Board of Trustees, and the SCRLC Executive Director and staff.

## **EFFECTIVE COMMITTEES**

An effective committee is achieved by having an effective chairperson and having effective participants.

Some basics about committee meetings:

1. An agenda is crucial--it drives the meeting and should be written in action language. It is distributed a least one week in advance of the meeting. Meetings should be limited to a maximum of 2.5 hours and the agenda should allow for a reasonable amount of discussion of each topic.
2. A meeting is where the group revises and/or updates its knowledge of what it knows as a group.
3. Every group has its own pool of shared knowledge.
4. It is a time and place where members can exchange ideas and information received or learned since the last meeting.
5. A committee represents the combined knowledge and expertise of all its members, which is in turn brought to bear on the issues before it.
6. An original idea by one committee member can be tested, analyzed, refined, amplified, and improved.
7. Committee meetings help individual members understand the collective aim of the group and create in participants a commitment to the goals and objectives of the committee.

## EFFECTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Some basics about being an effective committee member:

1. Please attend all meetings. Your participation is desired for successful committee projects! If you are unable to attend, please alert the SCRLC office (607-273-9106), or email the committee liaison or the Chair.
2. Try to arrive on time. It's often very disconcerting for others to have people arrive late. Late-comers often have to be briefed on what has transpired.
3. Always do your homework prior to the meeting: be familiar with the agenda and read any supporting documents sent with the agenda-- acquaint yourself with the issues the committee will be discussing.
4. Be open to points of view other than your own.
5. As a committee member, you are representing the interests of your library/library system, type of library, and the wider, multitype region.
6. Be courteous and sensitive to others. Side conversations can be distracting to others.
7. Speak up when you have something to say and particularly when you are knowledgeable in a particular area; however, do not overdo your participation by dominating the discussion.
8. Listen to what other have to say. Take notes.

## EFFECTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Some basics about chairing a committee:

1. It is important to stimulate and initiate discussion. Start the ball rolling by beginning with a general question that invites response. You might even brief one participant ahead of time to raise a question.
2. Balance the discussion. Do your homework ahead of time. Know the issues, people, and their viewpoints. If the discussion gets too one-sided, turn to someone who can balance it. If someone tries to dominate the discussion, listen for cues in his/her words to bring in another person with another point of view.
3. Many of the committee meetings are “hybrid,” with some members in the same room and others attending virtually. It is very important to engage the virtual attendees. Have them introduce themselves and as with any reticent committee member, if they are silent, ask for their thoughts and opinions. The SCRLC liaison will assist with monitoring the text chat and software performance.
4. Work through the agenda and avoid digressions. It is important to tell people when an item is off the agenda. Keep each topic and sub-topic to its allotted time. Work towards key issues and sacrifice details if you’re on a tight schedule.
5. Break up any fierce clash of ideas. While it is important to stimulate the exchange of ideas, it is very important not to let the discussion get out of hand. If this happens you can either call short recess or bring in neutral members to ask their points of view.
6. Keep the meeting alive. Bounce around the ball of discussion. If someone is day dreaming, find an excuse for including him/her in the discussion.
7. It is important to limit discussion of an item when one of the following conditions occur:
  - a. More facts are required;
  - b. The discussion has revealed that the meeting needs views of those not present to proceed;
  - c. Members need more time to think about the subject;
  - d. Events under discussion are likely to change;
  - e. It is clear that 2 or 3 members can settle this topic outside of the meeting without taking up others time;
8. Conclude the meeting. After you are finished with the agenda, state any conclusions, summarize the results, or next steps, i.e., get action started on the new business that was decided at the meeting.